

Words In The News

Teacher's pack

Lesson plan and student worksheets
with answers

Italy in rubbish crisis – 16
January 2008



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BBC Learning English – Words in the News

Naples in rubbish crisis – 16 January 2008

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Level: Intermediate and above

Topic: Protesters on Sardinia and Sicily are trying to stop the Italian government transporting rubbish from Naples to their islands.

Language: Vocabulary of a news report

Aims:

Reading skills	– Understanding a short news report
Language skills	– Vocabulary – acronyms
Writing skills	– Writing a story

Materials:

Worksheet 1	– Comprehension questions
Worksheet 2	– Vocabulary matching task
Worksheet 3	– Grammar/language focus – acronyms

News story – Available online at:

http://www.bbclearningenglish.com/newsenglish/witn/2008/01/080116_italy_rubbish.shtml

Preparation: Before the lesson, make enough copies of worksheets 2 and 3 so that there is 1 worksheet for every 4 – 5 students. Cut up the vocabulary and explanations to make a matching exercise. Students also need one copy each of worksheet 1.

If possible, bring some pictures from magazines or the internet of rubbish of old or disused things or things that people throw away, to use in the follow-up activity.

If you can't find pictures, write the words (for example, 'broken TV set', 'plastic bucket with no handle') on piece of card or paper and cut them up.

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LESSON STAGES

A Stimulate student interest in text

Ask students to think of ways to re-use the things which some people might think of as 'rubbish'.

'Rubbish'
empty drinks cans
egg shells
empty milk bottles
old clothes

Possible answers:

'Rubbish'	Way to recycle
empty drinks cans	use to make art
egg shells	put on a compost heap
empty milk bottles	recycle to make new glass products
old clothes	give to a charity shop

Ask students if they re-cycle their rubbish. Why/why not?

B Pre-teach essential vocabulary

Elicit/present key vocabulary that students need either to understand the key points in the text or to understand and/or answer any questions that you'll set them later in the lesson. The vocabulary is from Words in the news (so you can elicit the vocabulary by using the explanations provided online or below).

You could either pre-teach the vocabulary at this stage of the lesson or you could use the vocabulary building activity from further down in this lesson plan. Have students working together in small groups and ask them to try to match the vocabulary with the definitions. Encourage them to work with the other groups to pool their knowledge.

When they have done as much as they can, if they have dictionaries, ask them to look up the words to check their answers and to find out the definitions of any words they are not sure of. If they don't have dictionaries, check their answers and give them help with any words they aren't sure of.

Whichever method you use to elicit/present the vocabulary, you should then model it (say it clearly, highlighting the word stress) and get them to repeat the words after you.

Not in my backyard

a fixed expression which means 'I think something should happen but I don't want it to happen near me' (here, people from Sicily and Sardinia want rubbish to be put somewhere but they don't want rubbish from Naples to be put on Sicily and Sardinia)

trash

unwanted things, rubbish or waste

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merchant ship

boat which transports goods (rather than people as passengers)

scrutinised

looked at very carefully

to land

to unload things from a ship onto the ground

cargo ships and freight trains

boats and trains which carry goods (rather than people as passengers)

landfills

places where special services put people's waste and household rubbish which is then buried underground

scuffles

short, minor (not very serious or violent) fights

to hurl firebombs

to throw bombs that cause destruction by starting a fire rather than exploding

get out of hand

an idiom which means something can't be controlled any more

C Written record of vocabulary

Write the words on the board, eliciting spelling as you write. Elicit and show the word stress of each item and word class, if appropriate.

Give students some time to copy the boardwork into their notebooks.

Boardwork:

Not in my backyard

trash

merchant ship

scrutinised

to land

cargo ships and freight trains

landfills

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scuffles

to hurl firebombs

get out of hand

D Set a skimming question

Tell the students they are going to read a text about rubbish in Italy. Put this question on the board:

The Italian ex-Prime Minister says that people in other countries:

- A. have a positive image of Italy now
- B. have a negative image of Italy now
- C. don't have any particular opinion about Italy now

Students read text the first time.

Give them a time limit (1 - 2 minutes) to read the text quickly to find the answer to the question. They do not need to understand the details of the text to answer it.

E Check answers

B – have a negative image of Italy now. Paragraph 4 says, '... former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi ... said Italy's image abroad had been seriously damaged'.

F Set specific information questions

Hand out worksheet 1 or use the online quiz. Students complete the worksheet to help them understand the text in more detail. Give them a time limit (5 - 6 minutes) to read the text a second time in more detail and to answer the questions.

G Check answers

Elicit True or False answers. Direct attention to a particular paragraph if an answer is wrong to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 1 and answer key).

H Vocabulary consolidation/building

Students do the vocabulary matching exercise (worksheet 2 that you cut up before the lesson). In small groups they match the correct word with the right definition.

I Check answers

Elicit answers. If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer.

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J Vocabulary focus: Vocabulary – acronyms

Put these (or other well known) acronyms on the board and elicit from students what they're short for:

BBC
UN
UAE

(Answers: British Broadcasting Corporation, United Nations and United Arab Emirates)

Next, ask students if they can find the long version of this acronym in the text:

NIMBY

(Answer: Not in my backyard)

Then use worksheet 3 to focus on other acronyms.

K Check answers

If an answer is wrong, ask other students to try to elicit the correct answer (see worksheet 3 and answer key).

L Follow-up activity: Writing

Ask students if they think we throw away more or less than we did 50 years ago. Why is that? (Goods are cheaper, people are busier so need more and more gadgets to help them, advertising makes us want more things, etc).

Show students some of the pictures (or words) you have brought in showing things that people have thrown away.

Put the students into small groups of 4 or 5 students and ask each group to select 3 pictures or words.

Tell students they are going to work together in their groups to write a short story and they have to somehow include the 3 pieces of 'rubbish' in their tale.

Students decide what kind of story they will write (romance, detective, children's, science fiction, etc) and then work together in small groups to write their story.

Give them 2 or 3 minutes to brainstorm ideas and about 8 - 10 minutes to write their story.

Circulate, while they are working, giving help with grammar and spelling, if necessary.

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M Feedback

If possible, display the stories around the room and ask students to read them. Ask them which ones they found the most interesting, the most amusing, and which one made the best use of its 'rubbish'. Give praise for correct language, and give feedback on incorrect language. You could write some example phrases or sentences on the board and elicit from students which ones are correct and which ones are wrong and why.

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STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Are the following sentences true or false?

1.	People in the islands of Sardinia and Sicily don't want to deal with rubbish from other parts of Italy.	T/F
2.	All boats arriving into Sicily and Sardinia are being inspected to find out if they have rubbish in them from other parts of Italy.	T/F
3.	There is no more space underground for rubbish in Naples.	T/F
4.	All the people protesting about the rubbish have been very peaceful.	T/F
5.	Sardinia and Sicily are the only areas in Italy being asked to take the rubbish from Naples.	T/F
6.	The Italian ex-Prime Minister has shown his support for the way the Italian authorities are dealing with this problem.	T/F

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STUDENT WORKSHEET 2

VOCABULARY

Match these words and phrases to their definitions.

1.	Not in my backyard	A.	unwanted things, rubbish or waste
2.	trash	B.	short, minor (not very serious or violent) fights
3.	merchant ship	C.	to unload things from a ship onto the ground
4.	cargo ships and freight trains	D.	to throw bombs that cause destruction by starting a fire rather than exploding
5.	scrutinised	E.	a fixed expression which means 'I think something should happen but I don't want it to happen near me'
6.	to land	F.	boats and trains which carry goods (rather than people as passengers)
7.	landfills	G.	an idiom which means something can't be controlled any more
8.	scuffles	H.	places where special services put people's waste and household rubbish which is then buried underground
9.	to hurl firebombs	I.	looked at very carefully
10.	get out of hand	J.	boat which transports goods (rather than people as passengers)

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STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

ACRONYMS

Match these acronyms with both their full versions and their meanings. The first one has been done for you.

	Acronym		Short for		Meaning
1.	<i>NIMBY</i>	A.	High definition television	G.	A couple, who are both earning, with no children
2.	BOGOF	B.	<i>Not in my backyard</i>	H.	The female partners of team athletes
3.	NATO	C.	Double income, no kids	I.	If you purchase one of these items, you will get another one at no extra cost
4.	HDTV	D.	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	J.	<i>I want something to happen but not near me.</i>
5.	DINKIES	E.	Wives and girlfriends	K.	A TV that gives very clear, crisp pictures with vivid colours and much more detail than ordinary standard definition TV
6.	WAGS	F.	Buy one get one free	L.	A military alliance established by the signing of an agreement in 1949

1. *NIMBY* B. *Not in my backyard* J. *I want something to happen but not near me.*

Now, complete the sentences using the acronyms above.

1. Did you see the England team _____ during the World Cup in all the magazines? They just spent all their time out shopping and partying.
2. I saw that programme about life under the sea on _____ last night. The colours were amazingly sharp and clear.
3. It's alright for them, they can afford expensive holidays. What do you expect, they're_____. Just wait till they have children, it'll all change then!
4. There's a great _____ deal on toothpaste just now.
5. Everyone says they think the new airport is a great idea but when we ask about where it should be built, they suddenly get all _____ about it.
6. The _____ leaders are meeting in Geneva for talks on the current military crisis.

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ANSWER KEY

STUDENT WORKSHEET 1

1. **True** – Paragraph 1 says, "'Not in my backyard' is becoming the motto for millions of Italians being asked to accept unwanted trash from Naples'.
2. **True** – Paragraph 1 says, 'Every merchant ship that docks at ports in Sicily and Sardinia after sailing from the mainland is being scrutinised to see if it is attempting to land some of the accumulated rubbish'.
3. **True** – Paragraph 2 says, 'Local landfills around Naples are all full'.
4. **False** – Paragraph 3 says, '... several protesters have been injured in scuffles with the police... Two men were arrested on charges of planning to hurl firebombs'.
5. **False** – Paragraph 4 says, 'The government in Rome has asked regional authorities all over the country to accept some of this ... waste'.
6. **False** – Paragraph 4 says, '... former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has added his voice to those criticising the authorities for allowing the rubbish crisis to get out of hand'.

STUDENT WORKSHEET 2

- | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. E | 2. A | 3. J | 4. F | 5. I |
| 6. C | 7. H | 8. B | 9. D | 10. G |

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STUDENT WORKSHEET 3

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1. WAGS
2. HDTV
3. DINKIES
4. BOGOF
5. NIMBY
6. NATO

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Protesters on the Mediterranean islands of Sardinia and Sicily are challenging the Italian government's attempts to transport to their islands rubbish from Naples. The streets of Naples are stinking, piled with thousands of tonnes of rotting rubbish. This report from David Willey:

'**Not in my backyard**' is becoming the motto for millions of Italians being asked to accept unwanted **trash** from Naples. Every **merchant ship** that docks at ports in Sicily and Sardinia after sailing from the mainland is being **scrutinised** to see if it is attempting **to land** some of the accumulated rubbish from the Naples area that the Italian authorities are trying to clear.

Up to two hundred thousand tons of stinking household trash is being bulldozed by the army and loaded onto **cargo ships and freight trains** to destinations in various parts of Italy. Local **landfills** around Naples are all full.

In Sicily and Sardinia several protesters have been injured in **scuffles** with the police after ships docked with Neapolitan waste. Two men were arrested on charges of planning to hurl firebombs against the residence of the head of Sardinia's local regional government, Renato Soru.

The government in Rome has asked regional authorities all over the country to accept some of this huge accumulation of waste that Neapolitans fear is now a health hazard. A former police chief and an army general are in charge of operations to clean up the port city. Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has added his voice to those criticising the authorities for allowing the rubbish crisis to **get out of hand**. He said Italy's image abroad had been seriously damaged.

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a fixed expression which means 'I think something should happen but I don't want it to happen near me' (here, people from Sicily and Sardinia want rubbish to be put somewhere but they don't want rubbish from Naples to be put on Sicily and Sardinia)

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